Shreenathji Bhav-Bhavna

(An Emotional Depiction of the Temple of Shreenathji)

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Character of Bhagavad Bhakta Ajabkunwari:

In the path of devotion, Bhagwan becomes dependent on the devotee and fulfills their wishes. Just as Shriranchhodrayji came from Dwarka to Dakor being pleased by the devotion of devotee Bodana, and Shri Vithobaji came from Vaikunth to Pandharpur due to the loving devotion of devotee Pundarik, in the same way, as a result of the loving devotion of Ajabkunwariji, Nikunjanayak Shreenathji left His divine play-place Vraj and arrived in the desert land of Rajasthan, in the Mewar region.

This Ajabkunwariji is a priceless jewel of devotion in the eternal divine play of Shrinathji, and in that eternal play she exists as a companion named “Roop Aadhini,” always absorbed in the form of Shrinathji. Medta was a region in the Jodhpur area. Around the 9th–10th century, it was destroyed, but around Samvat 1518, Ray Dudaji Rathod rebuilt it. His lineage was Vaishnav. He had two sons: Veeramji and Ratanji. Veeramji had a famous devotee son named Jaymal, and two daughters named Veera and Ajabkunwari. Ratanji had a daughter named Mirabai, the poet-devotee. King Jaymal became a Vaishnav through the association of Haridasji, a sevak of Shri Gusainji, and his story is famous in the 26th Vaishnav of the 252 Vaishnav Varta. Mirabai had deep devotion to Shri Krishna from childhood. Ajabkunwari was married to the second son of Rana Udai Singh of Mewar. Mirabai and Ajabkunwari were cousins and both were widowed in childhood. Once Shri Gusainji, while traveling through Rajasthan on the way to Dwarka in Gujarat, came to Mewar. Near Udaipur, he saw a beautiful place called Sinhad and told Chacha Harivanshji that in the future Shreenathji would reside here, but for now He would not leave Girirajji.

Shri Gusainji stayed there for two days. Rana Udai Singh came for his darshan and offered the village of Sinhad. Shri Gusainji gave him prasad cloth and blessed him, and the king returned home. After this, Mirabai and Ajabkunwari came for the darshan of Shri Gusainji. Ajabkunwari saw him as the complete Purushottam form. Upon seeing him, she developed a deep desire to become a sevak. After returning home, Ajabkunwari felt intense separation and developed a fever. Mirabai asked her what had happened. Ajabkunwari said, “I will become a sevak of Shri Gusainji. I have seen him as Purushottam Shri Krishna, and now I cannot live without his darshan.” Mirabai said, “As you wish.” Immediately her fever of separation subsided. Ajabkunwari

then went to Shri Gusainji and prayed, “Maharajadhiraj, please accept me in your refuge.” Shri Gusainji gave her initiation and accepted her as a sevak. Seeing her deep attachment, he gave her his own sacred footwear and taught her the complete method of seva. By his grace, Shreenathji gave her direct darshan, spoke with her, laughed, and even played games with her daily. On days when she did not get darshan, she felt intense separation.

Once, Shreenathji had stayed at another devotee’s house, and the next day after Rajbhog Aarti, He came to Ajabkunwari’s house. She was deeply distressed in separation. When Shreenathji arrived, gave darshan, smiled, and accepted bhog, her suffering ended. When Shreenathji was about to leave, she requested Him to stay. He said, “For now, I must go. As long as Shri Gusainji is present, I must continue coming and going. But afterward, for many years, I will stay with you here in this room and give darshan to all.” Ajabkunwari said, “Nath, how can I trust this? You have many devotees.” Shreenathji replied, “I give you my word. Be assured.” Thus, whenever Shri Gusainji was at Girirajji, Shreenathji would daily come to Sinhad to Ajabkunwari, give darshan, play games, and fulfill her wishes. For many years, He granted her divine bliss. In Samvat 1642, Shri Gusainji entered eternal divine play. To fulfill His promise to Ajabkunwari, Shreenathji enacted a play of attack by invaders on Girirajji. On Samvat 1626, Aso Sud 15, He left Vraj and proceeded toward Mewar.

After performing divine pastimes at various places, He reached Mewar on Samvat 1728, Maha Vad 7, and became permanently established at Ajabkunwari’s original place in a newly established temple, where He continues to give darshan to all devotees even today. From Samvat 1465 to 1535, for 70 years, He accepted milk, curd, and butter from the people of Vraj. From Samvat 1535 to 1726, He resided at Girirajji and accepted seva through Shri Mahaprabhuji and Vallabh lineage. From Samvat 1728 onwards, He resides at Nathdwara in Sinhad, accepting the seva of Ajabkunwari in divine form, giving darshan to all and fulfilling devotees’ wishes. In Mewar, in Sinhad, on the hill resides my Shriji. Leaving Vraj, He lovingly came to Mewar, giving darshan with affection. For Ajabkunwari, He came to the hill and gives darshan with love. Pilgrims come from all lands; He always resides in peace and bliss. Seeing the form of Purushottam, my Shriji always resides in Mewar.

Offering One’s Life for Shreenathji:

After Shreenathji came from Vraj to Mewar, a Mughal commander came with an army to destroy the temple at Girirajji. Two Jaladhari sevaks of Shreenathji, Seva and Sabha, stood at Sinhpol with swords and fought in divine fervor for many days, not allowing the army to enter the temple. They killed many soldiers and let the commander go alive, saying, “Tell your emperor not to dare come here again.” After some days, the commander returned with a larger army. As Seva and Sabha prepared to fight again, Shreenathji appeared and said, “I am very pleased with you. Now do not show your valor. This army will not be able to do anything.” When the army came to Girirajji, they could not see the temple. Shreenathji had merged the entire temple into Girirajji. The army returned disappointed. Seva and Sabha, who were wounded while protecting the temple, offered their lives and attained the eternal divine play of Shreenathji. The temple, constructed through divine means accepted by Shri Mahaprabhuji from Purnamall Kshatriya, could not be destroyed by any invaders. Even today, that ancient temple gives visible darshan on Girirajji. (From the story of the manifestation of Shreenathji)

The Prophecy of the Manifestation of Shreenathji:

The manifestation of the divine form of Nikunjanayak Shreenathji, who is the very life of Shri Mahaprabhuji, Shri Gusainji, the entire Vallabh lineage, and all divine souls, was foretold thousands of years ago in the “Shri Giriraj section” of the Garga Samhita as follows: The form in which Bhagwan Shri Krishna lifted Mount Govardhan, that very form resides in the region called Shringar Mandal (Vraj). After 4500 years of Kaliyug have passed, in that same region, in front of all people, this self-manifested divine form will appear from within the cave of Giriraj. O King, the divine form that performs eternal pastimes on Giriraj will be called Devdaman by noble people. Those who behold this form of Shreenathji on Govardhan with their own eyes in Kaliyug will become fulfilled. In the east resides Jagannathji, in the south Ranganathji, in the west Dwarkanathji, and in the north Badrinathji. Thus, the four Naths reside in the four directions of Bharat. In the center of all these resides Govardhannathji, the Lord of all Naths. Thus, there are five great Naths in the sacred land of Bharat. A person who visits all four holy places but does not have darshan of Devdaman Shreenathji in the center does not receive the full fruit of the pilgrimage. But one who has darshan of Devdaman Shreenathji on Govardhan receives the fruit of visiting all four sacred places.

The Sequence of Shreenathji's Divine Activities on Earth:

● In Samvat 1465, on Ashadh Vad 3, Sunday, during Shravan Nakshatra at sunrise,

the raised arm of Shreenathji manifested on Giriraj.

● On Shravan Sud 5 of the same year, the darshan of the raised arm was received,

and the people of Vraj began worship, offerings, and bhog.

● In Samvat 1535, on Chaitra Vad 11, the face of Shreenathji manifested. At the same

time, in Champaaranya, the manifestation of Shri Vallabh in the form of His face also occurred.

● In Samvat 1549, on Shravan Sud 13, Shri Mahaprabhuji came to Giriraj, established

a small temple, and ceremonially installed Shreenathji. He accepted Ramdas Chauhan, who lived in a cave near Apsara Kund, as a sevak and entrusted him with seva.

● In Samvat 1556, on Chaitra Sud 2, Shreenathji instructed Puranmal Kshatriya of

Ambala in a dream to build a new temple.

● On Vaishakh Sud 3 of the same year, Puranmal, after taking refuge in Shri

Mahaprabhuji, began construction of the new temple.

● In Samvat 1576, on Vaishakh Sud 3, Shreenathji was ceremonially installed in the

newly completed temple on Giriraj. After Ramdas Chauhan attained divine leela, Bengali Gaudiya Brahmins were entrusted with seva.

● In Samvat 1590, due to misconduct by the Bengalis, Shreenathji

became

displeased and instructed Krishnadas Adhikari through Avadhutdas to remove them. Ramdas Sachora Brahmin was then appointed as head sevak.

● In Samvat 1623, on Maha Vad 7, Shrigirdharji brought Shreenathji to Mathura and

offered complete surrender.

● On Vaishakh Sud 14 of the same year, Shreenathji returned to Giriraj.

● In Samvat 1726, on Aso Sud 15, due to attacks by non-believers and to fulfill the

promise given to Ajabkunwariji, Shreenathji departed from Giriraj toward Mewar.

● In Samvat 1728, on Maha Vad 7, Shreenathji arrived in Sinhad (Mewar), at

Ajabkunwari's place, and was ceremonially स्था पत in a new temple.

● In Samvat 1858, on Aso Sud 8, due to an attack by Holkar, Shreenathji left Sinhad

and went to Ghaseda.

● In Samvat 1864, Shreenathji returned to Nathdwara, where He continues to give

darshan to devotees even today.

The Twelve Places of Shreenathji's Charan Chowki:

● Jatipura – on Giriraj, His original temple

● Mathura – where He was brought and offered complete surrender

● Agra – where He accepted Annakut

● Dandotdhar – where His chariot stopped and appeared as a mountain

● Krishnapuri – where He stayed during Chaturmas

● Kota – where He resided in Krishna Vilas

● Kishangarh – where He enjoyed spring

● Champaseni – where He accepted Annakut

● Udaipur – where He stayed for nine months

● Sinhad – where His chariot first stopped in Nathdwara

● Ghaseda – where He stayed during Holkar's attack

● Nathdwara – where He resides presently giving darshan

● The Four Seats of Shreenathji:

● Shyam Dhak – where He performed pastimes with devotees

● Gulal Kund – where He played Holi

● Tod no Dhano – where He gave darshan to a renunciate

The Form and Sentiment of Shreenathji:

● Rasol – where He stayed during Vraj Parikrama Also, at Govind Ghat in Gokul, where Shri Mahaprabhuji received divine command, the seat of Shreenathji is present.

Shreenathji's form is dark (Shyam). Scriptures describe Bhagwan as "Raso Vai Sah" meaning the embodiment of divine rasa. Among all rasas, Shringar is supreme, and its color is Shyam; therefore, Shreenathji is Shyam.

Shrimad Bhagavat represents His divine form. Its twelve cantos correspond to His twelve divine limbs: First canto – right lotus foot. Second – left lotus foot. Third – right arm Fourth – left arm. Fifth – right thigh. Sixth – left thigh. Seventh – right hand. Eighth – right chest. Ninth – left chest. Tenth – heart. Eleventh – head. Twelfth – left hand

Shreenathji stands at the doorway of Nikunj, calling His own devotees. His left hand is always raised, signaling devotees to come. His right hand is placed on His waist with the thumb shown, controlling the restless mind of devotees. Through this gesture, He indicates that worldly attachment is not the true place of the soul. The raised left hand calls devotees, and the right hand draws their minds toward Him.

The Sentiment of the Meaning of "Shri":

Shri means Prakriti, Adi Maya, the divine power of the Supreme Brahman. The Lord of that Shri is called Shreenathji. Shri also refers to Shri Swaminiji, and Her Lord is Shreenathji.

The Sentiment of the Three Forms of Shreenathji:

Shreenathji manifests on earth in three forms.

Devdaman – He subdued Brahma through the Vatsaharan Leela, Shiva through Ushaharan Leela, Kamdev in Ras Leela, Kuber through Shankhachud Vadh, and Yamraj by bringing back Devaki's dead sons. Thus, He is called Devdaman. This form resides in Nathdwara.

Indradaman – He subdued Indra by lifting Govardhan to remove Indra's anger. This form resides in Ujjain.

Nagadaman – He subdued Kaliya serpent and Kuvalayapeed elephant. This form resides in Vadodara.

The Sentiment of the Lotus Feet Marks:

On the right foot of Shreenathji, there are nine marks: Flag – gives fearlessness to surrendered souls. Ankush – controls the restless mind. Lotus – Bhagwan resides in the devotee's heart. Vajra – destroys sins and suffering. Swastik – brings auspiciousness. Ashtakon – grants powers and prosperity. Barley – ensures abundance. Upward line – grants spiritual ascent. Kalash – fills the heart with devotion.

On the left foot, there are seven marks: Cow hoof – grants the fruit of all pilgrimages. Jambu fruit – gives material and spiritual wealth. Fish – stabilizes the restless mind. Bow – symbolizes humility and protection from time. Triangle – removes inner faults like anger and greed. Half moon – honored even by Shiva. Sky – represents omnipresence.

Those who daily contemplate and remember these marks attain eternal devotion.

The Sentiment of the Pedestal (Pithika):

The pedestal of Shreenathji is square. His form is dark and two-armed. The raised left arm shows the lifting of Govardhan. The right hand on the waist signifies protection of devotees and the mood of divine dance.

On the pedestal: The parrot above represents Leela Shuk. Three sages represent Sanak and others. A sheep represents dynamic divine play. Sheshnag below represents support. Two cows represent Gokul, Earth, and Dharma. On the left side: A serpent represents Takshak (time). A lion represents Narasimha and guards the entrance. Two peacocks represent pure love. Near the right hand is a conch, symbolizing auspiciousness and the beauty of Swaminiji.. The cave and mountain depict Giriraj and Nikunj, and surrounding waves represent Yamunaji.

Shreenathji's Pithikaji is the means of nine types of devotion: (1) Serpent – listening devotion (2) Parrot – singing devotion (3) Sages – remembrance devotion (4) Sheep – service to the feet (5) Peacock – worship devotion (6) Sheshji – reverence devotion (7–8) Two cows – self-surrender and servitude devotion

(9) Lion – friendship devotion

On the right side of Shreenathji is the Nikunj of Shri Chandravaliji, on the left side is the Nikunj of Shri Swaminiji, above is the Nikunj of Shri Yamunaji, and below at the lotus feet is the Nikunj of Shri Kumarikaji.

On the head of Shreenathji is a tied hair knot, which has been tied by Shri Swaminiji. On the forehead is a natural musk tilak, representing the sentiment of Shri Chandravaliji. The ornaments on the ears and nose have been adorned by Shri Yashodaji. On the chin shines a brilliant diamond, representing the sentiment of Shri Chandravaliji. Shri Yashodaji has applied a protective black mark on the forehead so that no evil eye may affect Shreenathji. The anklets on the feet, ornaments in the hands, and waist belt are from the sentiment of Shri Swaminiji. The bracelets on the hands indicate that Shreenathji stands before Shri Swaminiji with folded hands, in obedience. The Vaijayanti garland around the neck represents Yogmaya. The pearl garland represents the sentiment of Shri Chandravaliji, and the gold garland represents the sentiment of Shri Swaminiji. On the chest is a tiger-claw ornament, placed by Shri Yashodaji for protection from fear and evil influence. Both arms are adorned with jeweled armlets—on the left arm from the sentiment of Shri Swaminiji, and on the right arm from Shri Chandravaliji. All ten fingers are adorned with jeweled rings, representing the sentiments of ten types of devotees. The nails of the lotus feet shine so brightly that even the moon feels shy. The light from these nails removes the darkness of ignorance from the hearts of devotees. The nails of the left foot remove the darkness of pushti devotees, and the nails of the right foot remove the darkness of maryada devotees. On the waist is a cloth tied to preserve the rasa. All types of divine play described in Venugit are expressed in the form of Shreenathji and His pedestal.

Therefore, the devotee who drinks the nectar of this form along with the understanding of the pedestal develops devotional rasa. One should therefore perform darshan, meditation, remembrance, and seva of Shreenathji along with contemplation of these auspicious symbols.

The Sentiment of the Divine Play of Shreenathji:

The form of Shreenathji is of a seven-year-old engaged in youthful divine play. As the Lord of Shri Swaminiji's Nikunj, He is called Nikunjanayak. He always performs divine pastimes with Shri

Swaminiji within the dense caves of Giriraj. He is the Lord of the heart-like Nikunj of Swaminiji. Within Giriraj, along with all divine companions, He performs eternal pastimes through all six seasons. He is the Lord of twelve Nikunjs. In His form, the Nikunj leela is manifest, while other leelas remain hidden. One should always contemplate such blissful, rasa-filled Shreenathji.

The Sentiment of Shreenathji's Temple:

The temple of Shreenathji is not constructed like other Hindu temples. There is no spire. The main sanctum where Shreenathji resides has a simple roof, which is the residence of the great devotee Ajabkunwari. Within the temple, the feeling of Nandalaya is present, and in Nathdwara town, the feeling of Vraj is maintained. Since Shreenathji is the Lord of all gods, the temple has a kalash, seven flags, and Sudarshan Chakra.

The seva method of bhog, raag, and shringar established by Shri Mahaprabhuji and developed by Shri Gusainji is unique and supreme among all religions. Where there are wells filled with ghee and oil, and gold and silver grinders for saffron and musk, the grandeur is beyond measure. The accounting of offerings, seva, and temple operations is beyond the capacity of worldly people. Shreenathji, being the Lord of Vraj, always resides in Vraj. According to His vow, "I will never leave Vraj," wherever He resides becomes Vraj itself.

Where Shreenathji resides, Yamunaji and Girirajji are also present. The Banas River in Nathdwara is Yamunaji, and the large northern hill represents Giriraj. Near the Banas River is Vrindavan garden with the beautiful Vimal Kund.

The Sentiment of the Twelve Gates:

There are twelve gates in Nathdwara, representing the twelve Nikunjs of Vraj. Within them resides Shreenathji. The twelve gates are:

1. Sinhad Gate
2. Mathura Gate

3. Apsara Gate

4. Lal (Market) Gate
5. Pulindini Gate (now not present)
6. Lal Gate
7. Nagar Khana Gate
8. Sinhpol Gate
9. Ratanpol Gate
10. Jagmohan Gate
11. Manikotha Gate

12. Nijmandir Gate

Shreenathji resides at the main Lal Gate.

The Sentiment of the Drums:

Before the darshan of Rajbhog, drums are played. They announce that Mangala, Shringar, and Gwal darshan have already taken place. They call devotees to come quickly for Rajbhog darshan. The drums also convey a message: in past lives, we did not serve Bhagwan, so we were born as animals. Now, after death, our skin has become drums and is being struck. Therefore, O devotees, awaken, remember Bhagwan, and serve Him with body, mind, and wealth.

The Sentiment of the Four Courtyards:

There are four courtyards:

1. Shri Govardhan Chowk

2. Phool Chowk (Dholi Patia)

3. Kamal Chowk

4. Ratan Chowk

Govardhan Chowk and Phool Chowk are rectangular, while Kamal and Ratan Chowk are square. Govardhan Chowk represents Giriraj and is covered with cow dung, representing the dust of Vraj. Here Govardhan Puja is performed. Devotees touch the dust here with devotion. All people are allowed here, just as all can go to Giriraj. Women sell vegetables and offerings for seva here, and devotees lovingly offer them to Shreenathji. On entering Govardhan Chowk, on the right side is the ancient chariot of Shreenathji, in which He traveled from Giriraj to Mewar to fulfill His promise to Ajabkunwari. Devotees bow to this chariot with devotion. Above on the right is the tailoring house where garments for Shreenathji are prepared daily according to seasons and festivals. On the left side is the temple of Shrinavneetpriyaji, representing Nandarayji's home, where child pastimes are performed. The seva of Shrinavneetpriyaji is similar to Shreenathji, and on major festivals He sits with Shreenathji. Nearby is the seat of Shri Mahaprabhuji, where devotees offer respects. Opposite is Krishnabhanda, where administration and offerings are managed, and where prasadi items are distributed.

The Sentiment of Surajpol:

Surajpol is opposite Govardhan Chowk. It has nine steps representing nine types of devotion. Through this gate, maryada devotees like kings and queens come for darshan. Currently, only women are allowed entry.

Offering Corn to Pigeons: Corn is fed to pigeons here because they are dear to Shreenathji and Swaminiji. Pigeons have seven qualities: Their color resembles Shreenathji. They stay devoted to one partner. Their feet are red like divine feet. They softly chant sounds like remembrance. They do not harm other beings. They remain united. They show mutual affection. All pigeons wait until one pair begins eating, and then all follow.

The Sentiment of Phool Chowk:

From Govardhan Chowk, one enters Phool Chowk, also called Dholi

Patia due to white marble. It has nine steps representing the nine forms of pushti devotion. Phool Chowk represents Golok Dham. Golok rests in the lap of Sheshji. Since Sheshji has an elongated form, Phool Chowk is also long. Those who perform seva, attendants, and Goswami children wear wooden footwear while moving, but upon entering Phool Chowk they remove it, because this place represents Golok and the bed of Sheshji.

There are twelve horizontal slabs in Phool Chowk, representing the twelve Nikunjs of Shreenathji. Sheshji has twelve coils, and each coil represents one Nikunj. Except for four slabs near Sinhpol, the remaining slabs are jeweled slabs. After Shayan darshan, devotees who sit here with faith, patience, and peace and observe these slabs experience divine glimpses and unique spiritual experiences. In the morning, gardeners sit here with various flowers, and devotees lovingly offer these flowers in seva to Shreenathji.

In the evening, painters sit here displaying paintings of various divine pastimes. The Sentiment of Sinhpol: The door on the left side of Phool Chowk is Sinhpol. Two lions stand near it, representing Rigveda and Yajurveda. Their raised tails indicate the tamasic aspect and karmic rituals. At Ratanpol, two seated lions represent Samaveda and Atharvaveda. Being forms of devotion and worship, they sit humbly in surrender to Shreenathji.

The Sentiment of Sinhpol Doors:

Of the two doors of Sinhpol, the right door remains open, representing Nikunj, where Shreenathji performs eternal pastimes. The left door is closed during afternoon rest and night sleep, representing Nandalaya, where Shreenathji is served in child form. When He sleeps, the door is closed, and when He wakes, it opens.

The Sentiment of the Two Rooms of Sinhpol:

There are two rooms on either side of Sinhpol. The left room represents Nandalaya and houses the eight sakhās. The right room represents Nikunj and houses the eight sakhīs.

The Sentiment of the Horses in Kamal Chowk:

From Sinhpol one enters Kamal Chowk. Currently, only male devotees are allowed entry. On both sides near Sinhpol are two horses, representing Nandalaya and the Yajna shala. Their divine form is the Ashwini Kumars, who are the physicians of Nandrai's household and protect from illness.

The Sentiment of Charanamrit Niche:

On entering Kamal Chowk, on the left corner is a niche from where Charanamrit of Shreenathji is distributed. Drinking it increases devotion, and devotees receive it with love.

The Sentiment of the Niches in Kamal Chowk:

There are nineteen niches in Kamal Chowk, representing the nineteen verses of Gopi Geet. During Raas Leela, the gopis sang these nineteen verses in separation and attained Bhagwan. Thus, Kamal Chowk represents the Raas place of Shreenathji.

The Sentiment of the Lotus in Kamal Chowk:

In the center is a marble lotus with eight petals, having twenty-four divisions. These represent the twenty-four syllables of Gayatri mantra and its three parts. Thus, the lotus represents Gayatri and the divine form of Bhagwan. Around the lotus are eight slabs and sixteen wave designs. The eight slabs represent divine forms, and the sixteen waves represent sixteen Vraj devotees arranged like Raas Mandal. Therefore, knowledgeable devotees do not step on this lotus. After Shayan darshan, temple cleaning is done here because Shreenathji performs Raas here. In the morning, Brahmins sit here and recite Shrimad Bhagavat and Vedas.

The Sentiment of the Niches on Sinhpol and Ratanpol Doors:

There are four doors in total, each having twenty-seven niches,

making 108 in total. These represent the 108 beads of a mala and also 108 Vraj devotees. Each Nikunj has nine devotees, making a total of 108.

The Sentiment of Chandarva (Canopy):

In summer, canopies are placed in Kamal, Phool, and Ratan Chowks to prevent heat from reaching the inner sanctum. At night, they are removed so that air can circulate and Shreenathji remains comfortable.

The Sentiment of Dhruv Bari:

In front of Shreenathji, in Doltibari, is Dhruv Bari. Dhruvji stands in Vaikunth performing constant devotion, so this window allows him darshan. There are 36 lattice openings, representing six ragas and thirty raginis. Each opening represents one raga or ragini.

The Sentiment of the Sakhis at Dhruv Bari:

There are eight sakhis serving Shreenathji—four near Dhruv Bari, two outside, and two near Anar Chowk. During the day they serve as sakhās, and at night as sakhīs. The eight pairs are:

1. Krishna Sakha – Champakalataji – Surdasji
2. Tok Sakha – Chandrabhagaji – Parmananddasji
3. Arjun Sakha – Vishakhaji – Kumbhandasji
4. Rishabh Sakha – Lalitaji – Krishnadasji
5. Bhoj Sakha – Chandralekhaji – Nanddasji
6. Subal Sakha – Padmaji – Chhitswami
7. Shridama Sakha – Bhamaji – Govindswami
8. Vishal Sakha – Vimalaji – Chaturbhujdasji

The Sentiment of Elephants at Ratan Chowk and Surajpol:

From Kamal Chowk, one enters Ratan Chowk through Hathipol. At the entrance, two elephants stand with trunks inside their mouths, symbolizing silence and inward remembrance. They indicate that devotees should remain calm and meditate while waiting for darshan. At Surajpol, elephants stand with open trunks, representing the path of maryada devotion. Inside Kamal Chowk are four white stones representing the four Sanak sages. Outside Ratan Chowk are carvings showing Indra on Airavat and Surabhi cow offering prostration. This signifies Indra's pride, punishment, repentance, and surrender. Thus, devotees are instructed to remain humble and always surrender to Shreenathji.

The Sentiment of Ratan Chowk:

Ratan Chowk is jeweled, with brilliance like the moon and heat like the sun. Devotees experiencing separation come here for darshan of the divine face. Entering with pure feeling grants the fruit of all pilgrimages. During festivals, it is decorated with lamps. Phool Chowk gives rise to love, Kamal Chowk to attachment, and Ratan Chowk to deep absorption.

The Sentiment of the Lock in Ratan Chowk:

At the entrance is a long lock representing the fist of Shri Swaminiji. It opens only with the key of love. Only by Her grace can one attain darshan of Shreenathji. Devotees touch this lock with their eyes in reverence.

The Sentiment of the Niches in Ratan Chowk:

There are ten niches representing ten essential principles of Pushti Marg:

1. Firm faith in Shreenathji, Shri Mahaprabhuji, and Guru
2. Perform seva with one's own body and wealth
3. Renounce worldly attachments
4. Maintain humility
5. Constant remembrance of divine leela

6. Experience union and separation

7. Sing Bhagwan’s qualities

8. Remain aware of Bhagwan’s greatness

9. Follow divine commands

10. Have faith and avoid fault-finding

The Sentiment of Jagmohan and Doltibari:

From Ratan Chowk, devotees enter Jagmohan through three doors. Here Shreenathji attracts all beings through His divine form and kirtan. Jagmohan represents Yamunaji and is long in structure. Festivals like Dolotsav, Hindola, and others are celebrated here. In the crowd, devotees sway, but only those steady can truly enjoy darshan.

The Sentiment of the Inner Chambers:

After Jagmohan is Manikotha, representing Kumarikaji's Nikunj. Then comes Nijmandir, representing Chandravaliji's Nikunj. On the right is Shayya Mandir, representing Swaminiji's Nikunj. Opposite is the sixth chamber, representing Yamunaji's Nikunj. In Manikotha, devotional songs composed by great devotees are sung according to seasons and darshan. Offerings are placed here. Outside Manikotha are eleven domes representing eleven sacred stones of Vraj.

The eleven sacred stones are as follows:

1. Dandoti Shila
2. Sinduri Shila
3. Kajali Shila
4. Gajni Shila
5. Bajni Shila
6. Shringar Shila
7. Sundar Shila
8. Sugandhini Shila
9. Vajra Shila
10. Chitra Vichitra Shila

11. Khisalni Shila

The Sentiment of Kirtaniya Gali:

After taking darshan from Jagmohan, the narrow lane through which one exits is called Kirtaniya Gali. It is built in the form of a cave, representing the place near Shayya Mandir in Giriraj where the eight sakhās and eight sakhīs perform kirtan according to time. It also represents the Nikunj of Shri Lalitaji.

The Sentiment of Anar Chowk and the Painting at Kuber's

Seat:

After exiting Kirtaniya Gali, there is a small courtyard called Anar Chowk. Where Samadhaniji sits, there is a painting on the wall above Kuber's seat showing Kamdhenu, Kalpavriksha, and Shreenathji milking cows. Kamdhenu and Kalpavriksha grant desired fruits, but they cannot give devotion. Devotion is granted only by Bhagwan through His grace. Shreenathji, residing in the heart of Samadhaniji, milks the cows in the form of devotees, just as milk is offered to Him from cows. In the same way, through Samadhaniji, the divine wealth of devotees is accepted by Shreenathji. In the expense storehouse, there are also paintings of Kamdhenu and Kalpavriksha. The painting at Kuber's seat represents the path of grace, while the one in the storehouse represents the path of discipline.

The Sentiment of Mala Gali:

"Ma" means Lakshmi, "La" means joy, "Ga" means singing, and "Li" means radiance. Lakshmiji, who is Shri Swaminiji here, resides in this path, spreading joy, singing, and radiance, hence it is called Mala Gali. Also, when the children of the Vallabh lineage return from seva, they receive the garland of Shreenathji here from the head sevak. Therefore, it is called Mala Gali.

The Sentiment of Pankha Gali:

The place where Shreenathji is fanned in summer is called Pankha Gali. “Pan” represents Kuber (lord of water) and “Kha” represents Indra (lord of air and creation of food). Together they serve Shreenathji by providing cool, gentle, fragrant air. “Pan” also means sin and “Kha” means destruction. Thus, entering this place destroys all sins.

The Sentiment of Veena:

According to the verse, Lalitaji plays the veena with sweet sound, awakening Shreenathji in Nikunj. The veena represents the sentiment of Shri Lalitaji.

The Sentiment of Khassa Bhandar:

On the right side of Anar Chowk is Khassa Bhandar, where various offerings for Shreenathji are prepared by sevaks. The sugar store is also located here.

The Sentiment of Prasadi Bhandar:

Opposite Khassa Bhandar is Prasadi Bhandar, where the offerings made to Shreenathji are placed as Mahaprasad and later distributed to sevaks.

The Sentiment of Shak Ghar:

On the right side of the lane near Kirtaniya Gali is Shak Ghar, representing Giriraj. Inside is a painting of Giriraj. Its three doors represent the three peaks of Giriraj: Adi Shikhar, Dev Shikhar, and Brahma Shikhar. The place for washing hands represents the hearts of Vraj devotees, and the water represents their love. Only after purifying oneself with this love can one perform seva. The copper vessel represents the lake of devotees’ hearts. The bamboo baskets represent their offering hands. The four wooden pillars represent four group leaders. The head of Shak Ghar represents Shri Swaminiji.

Sevaks cover their mouths and perform seva with focus. It is said that those who serve here attain residence in Golok.

The Sentiment of Phool Ghar:

Opposite Shak Ghar, upstairs, is Phool Ghar, representing Nikunj. Flowers represent the hearts of Vraj devotees. There are three baskets representing the hearts of Swaminiji, Chandravaliji, and Lalitaji. The needle used for threading flowers represents the sound of the flute, and the thread represents love. Yellow flowers represent Swaminiji, white represent Chandravaliji, red represent Lalitaji, dark represent Giriraj, and deep dark represent Yamunaji. Other flowers represent different Vraj devotees. Sevaks perform flower seva with covered mouths and devotion, attaining Golok.

The Sentiment of Paan Ghar:

Paan represents affection. In Nandalaya, it is offered in the sentiment of Yashodaji, and in Nikunj, it represents the nectar of Swaminiji's lips. Ingredients represent different divine sentiments: Catechu – Kishoriji. Lime – Chandravaliji. Betel nut – Swaminiji. Clove – Lalitaji. Rose water – Yamunaji. Cardamom – Gopis. Nutmeg and others – various devotees. The covering cloth represents Swaminiji's sari. The trays represent the hearts of Swaminiji and Yamunaji. The sevaks represent Swaminiji and Vraj devotees. The Sentiment of Milk House, Mishri House, and Peda House:

In Anar Chowk are the milk house, mishri house, and peda house. Various offerings are prepared here. The peda house prepares charanamrit pedas.

The Sentiment of Patal Ghar:

Here is the chamber of Yamunaji where vessels are purified. The vessels represent the hands of Vraj devotees. Before cleaning them, devotees pray to the Vraj devotees.

The Sentiment of Jalpan Room:

Near Patal Ghar is the Jalpan room where water vessels are filled. The spout represents Swaminiji's lips, and the water is nectar. The red cloth around it represents Yamunaji. From here, the conch is blown, representing the Vedas. The conch is blown three times, representing Swaminiji, Chandravaliji, and Yamunaji.

The Sentiment of Grinding House:

On the way from Phool Chowk toward Pritampol is the grinding house. Grains for offerings are ground here using large wooden mills operated by strong oxen.

The Sentiment of Kitchen:

There are nine stoves representing nine forms of devotion. Five face east for Rajbhog, two face north for Shayan bhog, and two face west for other offerings. The cooks represent Yashodaji, Rohiniji, Swaminiji, and Chandravaliji. Rajbhog is prepared in the sentiment of Swaminiji, and Shayan bhog in the sentiment of Chandravaliji. For Annakut, there are twelve stoves representing twelve Nikunjs. Even today, only wood is used for cooking. Various offerings are prepared in countless varieties such as rice, kheer, khichdi, sweets, vegetables, breads, and more.

The Sentiment of Bal Bhog:

Bal Bhog is the offering made in the child form of Shreenathji. It is in the sentiment of Yashodaji. Various sweets like laddus, jalebi, barfi, and others are prepared.

The Sentiment of Milk House:

Milk is very dear to Shreenathji. It is lovingly given by cows and used to prepare many items like peda, basundi, curd, butter, and more.

Cows are very dear to Shreenathji, hence He is called Gopal. The place where cows reside in Nathdwara is called Nathuwas. Devotees are encouraged to serve cows every year.

The Sentiment of Shreenathji's Flag:

On the temple are flags, kalash, and Sudarshan Chakra. The flag represents the gopis. It is placed on bamboo, which represents the flute. The flags are made of various cloths representing the gopis' garments, hence they are changed daily. One who offers a flag becomes blessed by Vraj devotees and receives the grace of Shreenathji. There are seven flags representing the seven sons of Shri Gusainji. The Sentiment of the Seven Flags of Shreenathji: (1) Cloud-dark flag – represents Shreenathji (2) Yellow flag – represents Shri Swaminiji (3) Dark flag – represents Shri Yamunaji (4) White flag – represents Shri Chandravaliji (5) Green flag – represents Shri Radha's companions (6) Purple flag – represents Shri Girirajji (7) Pink flag – represents the Gopis. In this way, the seven flags represent various divine companions and pastimes.

Further meanings of the seven flags are as follows: Shreenathji was seven years old when He lifted Govardhan. He held Govardhan for seven days. He possesses six divine qualities—power, strength, fame, wealth, knowledge, and detachment—and He Himself is the seventh, the possessor of these qualities. Shreemad Bhagavat is His name-form, and Shri Mahaprabhuji revealed seven meanings of it. The tenth canto of Bhagavat, which is its heart, contains sections with seven chapters. Shukdevji recited Bhagavat to King Parikshit over seven days. All beings depend on seven elements for protection, but during Indra's wrath, none protected Vraj—only Shreenathji did. Thus, one should take refuge only in Him. During the golden offering by King Krishnadev, Shri Mahaprabhuji accepted only seven gold coins and made anklets for Shreenathji. Shri Gusainji has seven sons. There are seven seats and divine forms in Pushti Marg. Shreenathji arrived in Mathura on Maha Vad 7. His installation in Nathdwara also took place on Maha Vad 7. His flute has seven holes. Music has seven notes. There are seven days in a week. There are seven sacred cities in Bharat. There are seven higher and seven lower worlds. There are seven sages in the sky. The circumambulation of Giriraj is seven kos. There are seven continents. Thus, the seven flags themselves are the divine form of Shreenathji. They can be installed and worshipped like Him, and offerings can be made to them.

The Sentiment of the Kalash:

Between the four chambers are two kalash—one large and one small. The large kalash represents Shri Mahaprabhuji and Shri Swaminiji, and the small kalash represents Shri Gusainji and Shri Chandravaliji. Below them are four lions representing Dharma, Artha, Kama, and Moksha, preventing unworthy entry. The large kalash represents love, and the small represents enjoyment and adornment.

The Sentiment of Sudarshan Chakra:

Above the kalash is the Sudarshan Chakra of Shreenathji. It protects devotees and represents Shri Gopinathji. Sudarshan means the essence of all scriptures. It is offered fragrant attar daily, and those who offer it with devotion have their wishes fulfilled.

The Sentiment of Jewelry House:

The ornaments in the jewelry house represent the sentiments of Vraj devotees. Only those upon whom Shreenathji bestows grace are adorned by Him. Precious ornaments, decorative backdrops, and garments are prepared and preserved here according to seasons and festivals.

The Sentiment of Eight Daily Darshans:

Mangala: In the early morning, Shreenathji is awakened with music by Swaminiji and devotees. After waking, He accepts Mangala bhog and gives darshan. The separation of the night is removed through Mangala Aarti.

Shringar: After bath, He is adorned with garments and ornaments according to season. Yashodaji and Swaminiji perform the adornment, and He gives Shringar darshan. Gwal: After Shringar, He takes Gwal bhog and prepares to go for cowherding with friends. Darshan is given in this form.

Rajbhog: Food prepared by Yashodaji is sent to the forest. Shreenathji enjoys it with friends and Swaminiji. Afterward, He gives Rajbhog

darshan, and the temple is closed. Utthapan: After rest, He awakens and gives Utthapan darshan. Bhog: After Utthapan, He accepts bhog and gives darshan. Sandhya: At sunset, He returns from cowherding, and Sandhya Aarti is performed. Shayan: After returning, He is put to rest. Devotees take Shayan darshan with the feeling of separation through the night.

The Sentiment of Darshan Forms:

Mangala – in the form of Navneetpriyaji

Shringar – in the form of Gokulchandramaji

Gwal – in the form of Dwarkanathji

Rajbhog – in the form of Govardhannathji

Utthapan – in the form of Mathuranathji

Bhog – in the form of Gokulnathji

Aarti – in the form of Vitthalnathji

Shayan – in the form of Madanmohanji

The Sentiment of Shringar:

Different ornaments represent different devotees: Mukuta – Krishnadasji. Tipara – Govindswami. Others – Nanddasji, Kumbhandasji, Surdasji, Parmananddasji, Chaturbhujdasji, Chhitswami, and Yashodaji

The Sentiment of Days:

Sunday – red – Lalitaji. Monday – white – pure sakhi. Tuesday – red – messenger sakhi. Wednesday – green – Kumarika. Thursday – yellow – Swaminiji. Friday – white – Chandravaliji. Saturday – dark – Yamunaji

The Twelve Powers of Shreenathji:

These divine powers perform various functions: They conceal divine secrets, prevent unworthy entry, prepare materials for divine play, support devotion, arrange seasons, facilitate pastimes, and bring joy. They include Yogmaya, Katyayani Devi, Vrinda Devi, Chandravaliji, Sanket Devi, Lalita Devi, Vimala Devi, Navari Devi, Chovari Devi, and Anandi Devi, who remove sorrow and grant bliss. The Nine Lotuses: They remove ego, adorn devotees, narrate divine stories, and serve under the guidance of group leaders. There are nine lotus symbols on the divine body of Shreenathji: Two lotus hands. One lotus face. Two lotus feet. One lotus heart. Two lotus eyes. One lotus navel. Similarly, there are nine lotus symbols on the divine body of Shri Swaminiji.

The Seven Holes of Shreenathji's Flute:

The upper main hole is for Shri Swaminiji to drink the divine rasa. The second hole is for Shri Chandravaliji. The third, fourth, and fifth holes provide rasa to the sixteen thousand divine maidens. The sixth hole gives rasa to the cows. The seventh hole nourishes Girirajji, all animals, birds, trees, creepers, and even satisfies the gods.

Even Today Shreenathji Drinks Milk from Nandji's Lineage of Cows: In the village of Jamanavata, there was a Vraj resident named Dharmadas who owned many cows. One cow from Nandrayji's lineage would leave the herd, go to Giriraj, and offer milk directly into the mouth of Shreenathji, then remain there. When Dharmadas discovered this, he tried many ways to bring the cow back but failed. Then Shreenathji spoke directly, "Dharmadas, take this cow to Sadupande's house. This cow belongs to My lineage, and I will drink its milk daily." Following this command, Dharmadas took the cow to Sadupande's house. Even today, the lineage of that cow continues, and Shreenathji still drinks milk from that lineage. Devotees can still see these cows in Shreenathji's cowshed.

The Six Seasons in Pushti Marg:

1. Hemant – Kartik Sud 11 to Magshar Vad 8
2. Shishir – Magshar Vad 9 to Maha Sud 4
3. Vasant – Maha Sud 5 to Vaishakh Sud 2

4. Grishma – Vaishakh Sud 3 to Ashadh Sud 1
5. Varsha – Ashadh Sud 2 to Bhadarva Sud 10
6. Sharad – Bhadarva Sud 11 to Kartik Sud 10

The Five Elements of Pushti Marg:

1. Shri Thakorji
2. Shri Vallabh lineage
3. Vraj Bhumi

4. Shri Yamunaji

5. Shri Govardhan (Girirajji)

Other Important Places for Darshan:

Expense Storehouse: Upon entering Lal Darwaja, on the left is the expense storehouse where ghee, oil, grains, and all materials are stored. Before the current temple was built, Shreenathji first resided here. Now His image is present here for darshan. Education Department: On the way from Phool Chowk to Pritampol, the education department is on the right. It manages libraries, publications, and research. Motimahal: Located near the temple, where Tilkayat resides. It has a beautiful wooden pavilion and displays divine paintings including Bhagavat illustrations. Temple of Shri Vitthalnathji: Located opposite Pritampol, this temple houses the form served by Shri Govindrayji. It also has the seat of Shri Harirayji.

Other temples in Nathdwara include Vanmaliji, Madanmohanji, and Gopal Lalji. After understanding the divine sentiments of Shreenathji, how can one not feel deep longing for His darshan? The mind repeatedly desires to run and behold Him again and again.

Thus, devotees sing:

શ્રીજી મેરા એસા રિસયા, મુજને બોલાવે વહાલો ઘડી ઘડી મોર મુકુટ પીતાંબર સોહે, બંસી બજાવે વહાલો તાન

ભરી ||૧||| સબ સ ખયનમેં રાસ રચ્યો છે, દરસન દે વહાલો ઘડી ઘડી। દોર દોર દરશનકુ જાવ, ઝાપટ વાગે તડા

તડી ||રા ચાર ચોક્કો મં દર બનાયો, આપ બરાજે વહાલો છપરતરી, “નંદદાસ'પ્રભુકી છ બ િનરખત, શ્રીજી કે

ચરણમેં જાય પરી ||૩|

Shriji is such a rasik beloved, he calls me again and again with love, and wearing a peacock crown and yellow garments, he beautifully plays the flute with filled melodies.

||૧|| Among all the sakhis he has created the rasa dance, and he grants his darshan

again and again, and in longing for his darshan again and again, the heart trembles with

intense yearning. ||૨|| A temple with four courtyards is made, and he himself is seated

there with love beneath the canopy, and beholding the form of the Lord, Nanddas falls at

the feet of Shriji. ||૩||

|| Jai Shri Krishna ||